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✓ AMERICA'S ESKIMOS;
CAN THEY SURVIVE?

DIAMOND JENNESS

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America's Eskimos; Can They Survive?

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by

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FOREWORD

To initiate the 1962-63 series of University Lectures on the general theme of "Canada and the Emerging Peoples and Nations" it was our happy privilege on October 16, 1962, to have with us Dr. Diamond Jenness, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, long time chief of the Division of Anthropology of the National Museum of Canada, recipient of the Massey Medal of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, author of "Peoples of the Twilight" and the authoritative "The Indians of Canada".

The lecture is here printed in its entirety as delivered. The heart is the central portion. But the initial paragraphs remind us of the wide spread of the intellectual interest of the speaker; and the last reminds us that his words were delivered to a University audience comprising students as well as their elders. To both groups it brought the felicitously expressed conclusions of a respected authority on a vital problem for Canada both now and in the immediate future, and it is here presented to bring these to the attention of a wider audience.

W. E. Gwatkin, Jr.,

*Chairman of the Committee on
University Lectures*

America's Eskimos; Can They Survive?

By

DIAMOND JENNESS

It has been my good fortune, during recent years, to spend several winters on the French and Italian Rivas, haunting not the luxurious waterfront hotels and the sandy beaches, but the little towns and villages along the coast and the narrow valleys and mountains behind them. As I strolled one day along a quiet street in Genoa I remarked to an Italian friend beside me, "What a splendid old building that is over there." But he merely shrugged his shoulders and replied, "That is not an old building; only sixteenth century."

"Only sixteenth century," I said to myself. Was not that the century in which Jacques Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence River to Quebec and opened up Canada to European colonization? Where were Montreal and Toronto in those days? How many Europeans had ever heard of America's Eskimos?

In a village called Albissola, about thirty miles west of Genoa, I leased an apartment in what had been during that sixteenth century the living quarters of the servants of an Italian marquis. His palace had been transmuted into shops and dwellings; but the twelfth century church in which his family had worshipped stood intact, carefully preserved by the Italian government, and in the village itself the workmen in seven small ceramic factories faithfully carried on the traditions of the middle ages, turning out vases and jars of exactly the same shapes as those made by their forebears, and painting them with the same charming landscapes. In the foothills behind the village soldiers of Augustus Caesar, Rome's first emperor, had spanned a small stream with a stone bridge still capable of bearing the weight of a cart; for nearly a mile I followed the broken sections of their cobble-stoned road towards Transalpine Gaul and the valley of the Rhone. One year later, I picked up traces of the same road forty miles away near the little town of Albenga, in whose main square the towers of four Renaissance palaces ring one of Europe's oldest churches, a small baptistery built in the sixth century A.D. on ground now covered by five feet of soil. Three hundred, or perhaps four hundred years before the early Christians erected this church, while Rome was still a pagan city, a large galley freighting wine from Naples to the mouth of the Rhone sought shelter from a storm in Albenga's open bay, but foundered only half a mile off its headland; from the shore I watched an Italian dredge salvage for the local museum its cargo of about 200 *amphorae* or wine-jars, each five feet high and still intact, but now, alas, without their beverage. Yet even more ancient than this Roman ship, perhaps, were some tiny stone huts tucked away on the mountain slopes

behind the town, huts built of limestone slabs without mortar, and covered with stone roofs so flat that they seemed ready to collapse before one's eyes.

From Albenga I continued my pilgrimage west to the French border, and beyond that border to the valley of the Rhone, visiting the ruins of Roman aqueducts, Roman memorial arches and amphitheatres, a three-tiered Roman viaduct west of the city of Nimes, and in the city itself a Roman temple which modern man, who worships not Jupiter but Mammon, has converted into a commonplace market. Concerning these and other monuments of antiquity history has given us written records. But in this region I was beginning to pass beyond the age of writing into the realm of pre-history, into those dim ages when man had not yet invented an alphabet or learned to cultivate the soil. In the small town of Draguignan, fifty miles behind the seaside resort of Cannes, that playground of exiled royalty, film-stars and moguls from east and west—there stands, fifteen feet high, the rough but imposing doorway of some chieftain's tomb which has defiantly resisted 4,000 years of rain and sun; and when I crossed the Rhone River and climbed the eastern slopes of the Cevennes Mountains, I came upon other dolmens or burial mounds erected by a race that fashioned its weapons and tools from stone instead of metal. Pushing on from there to the Dordogne plateau, in the very heart of France, I entered a limestone region pitted with caves on whose walls a still more ancient race had painted scenes of hunting, and representations of wild animals such as mammoths and sabre-toothed tigers that have long since vanished from the earth.

Here, then, in this corner of Europe, fate has preserved for us a compendium of our forefathers' history, from the twentieth century of the Christian era back to a time when the northern hemisphere of our globe was colder than it is today, and vast sheets of ice covered Eurasia north of the Alps and the Himalayas, just as they now cover Greenland and Antarctica.

In that age ice sheets covered most of Canada also, and here too, we believe, man endured and survived them, though the evidence is still rather slender. Quite recently we have discovered that in our own American Arctic, near the Alaska-Canada boundary, Eskimos, or people resembling Eskimos, were resisting the unbroken mid-summer daylight and the unbroken mid-winter night, snow and ice and temperatures of 60° below zero Fahrenheit, long centuries before the Romans founded their city on the muddy Tiber, perhaps even before the Israelites prayed for the Moses who would lead them out of slavery into the Promised Land. How long before, how many centuries even then these Eskimos, or proto-Eskimos, had been living in our Arctic we do not know; nor whence they came or

why they remained there, the only race, white, yellow or black, that has ever wrestled unaided with the polar ice and won the struggle. No other people has settled in that region more than a few days or weeks without constant assistance and support from the warmer and richer world to the south.

Why was it that only the Eskimos succeeded in overcoming the Arctic environment? What advantages did they possess over other races? What qualities, physical or mental, that other people lacked?

With some qualities, we know, nature did not endow them, although she bestowed them on other living things that dwell in the Arctic. She did not shield them from the bitter cold as she shielded the seals and the polar bears, by depositing an abnormally thick layer of fat under their skins. She did not protect their bodies with a dense warm coat of hair or fur such as she wraps around the caribou and the fox. The Eskimo does, or did, wear a coat of fur, but it was an *ersatz* one that he stole from those animals, and from the seal and the bear; he himself is more hairless than a white man, and seldom grows even a thin beard to protect—or endanger—his chin. He cannot store up fat and hibernate, like the bear and the marmot, much as a few natives might wish to now. Actually the majority prefer the winter season to the summer, for grown-ups as well as children love to romp in the snow.

Nevertheless, the Eskimos were—and are—a little different from other people, even though they have often been mistaken for Chinese. The long arms of a negro reach to the knees and occasionally lower; a white man's arms rarely touch his knees; and an Eskimo's extend only about half-way down his thigh. His hands and feet, too, are smaller than ours, as you quickly discover if you try to put on his gloves or sealskin slippers. Is this because, in a very cold climate, it is easier for the heart to pump warm blood into short limbs than into long ones? Then, again, the nose cavities through which an Eskimo breathes are smaller than the cavities in other races. Is that to protect his lungs from freezing when the wind is howling and the thermometer registers 50° below zero? We feel as bewildered as the traveller in Africa who asked his guide, "Does the giraffe strip the leaves from tall trees because its neck is so long? Or has its neck become phenomenally long from its habit of stripping tall trees?"

I am unable to answer these troublesome questions. I do know, however, that though the Eskimo's hands and feet will freeze almost as quickly as my own, he is a tougher individual than I am and will struggle on without a groan. I know, too, that he has an unusually sensitive funny-bone, and will plod doggedly along a seemingly endless trail until he drops from sheer exhaustion, provided I keep tickling that funny-bone with remarks that he finds amusing. He is a loyal and cheerful companion on a hard journey; and if his eyes

should slant a little more than mine, or his cheek-bones show up more prominently, why should I care? The companion I need is a man who will march steadily beside me when the going is rough and a blizzard is lashing our faces; and the Eskimo is just such a man.

It has needed more than toughness, however, and a lusty sense of humour, to win a livelihood and raise up families in the Arctic, generation after generation, without any help from the outside world. It has required great adaptability and inventiveness to cope with the strange and exceedingly difficult environment, where no trees grow because the ground is forever frozen below the top few inches, where berries seldom ripen on the rare bushes because the summer is too short, where all birds except three or four species—one of them the useless raven—flee the region for eight months of every year and no more animals roam the land than hide in the sea. How could man feed and clothe his family in such an environment? What sort of house could he build that would shelter his wife and children during the long, dark nights of winter? How could he heat his home, how light it up during the weeks, in some places months, when the sun does not rise above the horizon?

We know from travellers' descriptions how the Eskimos contrived to do all these things. Some of us have seen them with our own eyes. I have stalked the wild caribou with Eskimos who were armed only with bows and arrows; I have watched them practise those clever tricks to which every primitive hunter must resort if his family is not to die of starvation. In northernmost Alaska I have helped Eskimos to build small cabins from the driftwood which the Mackenzie River carries down to the Arctic ocean, and to insulate the rude dwellings with clods of earth; and, farther east, where driftwood is lacking, I have learned from them to erect a dome-shaped house of snow—the *igloo* that melts away under the rays of the spring sun, and even in mid-winter drips water on your head if too many warm-blooded visitors crowd into your home.

In my own snow-hut I could fry bacon, and boil rice and oatmeal, over a kerosene-burning primus stove; but the only food many of my Eskimo friends had ever tasted was the meat of the caribou, seal and other wild game that they killed, and the fish they caught in the lakes and in the sea. Sometimes, through lack of fuel, they ate their food raw, but generally they cooked it in 'stone pots,' heated by stone lamps that burned the animals' fat or blubber. A trained economist would have observed how they practised in their kitchen the same division of labour as we do. It was the men who manufactured the pots and the lamps, but only the women knew how to use them efficiently. A ten-year-old girl could trim a lamp to perfection, but whenever I dared to disturb its wick I invariably smoked up the whole dwelling.

As in the kitchen, so too in the art of tailoring, women displayed a marked superiority over men. Of all the world's peoples outside Europe and parts of Asia only the inventive Eskimos ever made separate coats and trousers tailored to fit their wearers. The ten-year old girl who learned to keep the lamp smokeless, and to preserve all the flavour of caribou tongues by boiling them with the tips upward, could cut out and stitch a perfectly-fitting suit of caribou fur, artistically adorned with inset patterns; but the man who attempted to make or mend his own trousers looked like a hobo. We need not wonder, then, that before the white man entered the Arctic no one ever heard of an Eskimo youth, or an Eskimo maid, reaching the age of eighteen unmarried. Spring is very short in the Arctic, and children, like young birds, must take flight earlier than they do in southern climes. By sixteen at the very latest, the youth was a trained hunter who made his own tools and weapons and could build his own home; and the girl was a trained cook and seamstress, ready to help build that home and preside over it with all the poise and dignity of her mother.

In many, many ways the Eskimos have revealed more than usual adaptability and ingenuity. It was from them that we Europeans learned to speed over the frozen sea with dog-sleds, and to capture great whales and walruses with hand harpoons. The light fold-boat in which some of our holiday-seekers explore the inland waters of Europe, and even a few of our North American rivers, is merely an imperfect copy of the Eskimo's skin-covered *kayak* from which he harpooned the seals in the ocean, and speared the caribou as they swam the rivers and the lakes during their spring and autumn migrations.

For Arctic living, nevertheless, the Eskimos needed more than short limbs and narrow noses, adaptability and resourcefulness. Their stern environment where, throughout nearly half the year, cold and darkness confined them for sixteen to eighteen hours each day to one-roomed dwellings which every neighbour entered at will, and into which every stranger or chance visitor squeezed for shelter and rest,—an environment whose innumerable dangers, foreseen and unforeseen, limited their average span of life to less than twenty-five years, forcing them to cling to one another for safety, to share every hardship of fishing and the chase, and to hold all food in common,—that environment also imposed on them a deep social consciousness, strong social bonds that elsewhere man has generally worn more loosely, whereas the ants, the bees, cattle, and many other forms of life that share this earth with us, wear them inescapably tight. The Eskimos had to abrogate all privacy, to submerge—yet at the same time to preserve—their separate individualities, and to acquire an endurance of one another's company, a tolerance of each other's idiosyncrasies, far beyond the capacity of most Europeans.

We of Old World descent, who through our superior knowledge of nature's forces have been holding the rest of the world at our mercy, incline to be mavericks, weaker than other peoples in that social consciousness that holds human communities together. But now that this atomic age with its fantastic powers of destruction links together all mankind in a common fate, we must either develop a profounder sense of our obligations toward our fellow men than even the Eskimos possessed, or prepare to follow the dinosaur and the mammoth into total oblivion.

I have said that the Eskimos possessed (and, I believe, still possess) special qualities, some hereditary, others the product of their environment, which enabled them to adapt to the rigours of Arctic existence and maintain themselves in that forbidding region for many thousands of years. Let us recall how, not so long ago, Sir John Franklin and more than a hundred hardy English seamen perished from starvation and exposure in the area around the Magnetic Pole, where Eskimos have been living for centuries and still struggle to preserve a foothold so that they may pass on the torch of life to their children. Then let us ask ourselves, "Should we permit so remarkable a people to fade away and disappear from the face of the earth because their outward appearance is a little different from ours, and many of them have not yet learned to speak our language or to think and act exactly as we do?"

If man is to keep on evolving—and he seems to have no option but to follow evolution's mysterious road—then surely the Eskimos, with their unique experience and special qualities, can make some useful contribution to his progress. During the recent Korean War the United States enrolled two battalions of Eskimo scouts for the defense of Northern Alaska, and a senior military authority declared that they

"constitute the most alert, most intelligent, most patriotic people living in this section of the country. Their services in a time of emergency would be most valuable."

Can we doubt that a race which served the United States so well in wartime can render the world equal and even greater service in times of peace?

"Everything is in motion," said the ancient Greek philosopher; and the Eskimos, together with the environment in which they live, have changed and are changing. We Europeans have brought them to a cross-road in life's journey, and their path ahead is obscured by fog. Their heredity is changing. The blood of white men now flows in the veins of most of them, modifying their genes but not, we hope, destroying the qualities that make for survival and progress. Missionaries, traders and government officials have submerged their culture, and many of their ancient patterns of thinking

and living have vanished, or are vanishing. Even their physical environment has changed since the coming of the white man, so that it is no longer possible for them to live as their ancestors lived. The wheel of their operations has been broken, a modern Greek would say, and they must either rebuild that wheel or perish. Unless they can adapt themselves to radically new conditions they will go under.

What are these new conditions, this new environment that has enveloped them so suddenly? Except in southern Greenland, the climate of their Arctic has not sensibly changed. Winters are not a day shorter than they were in pre-European times, the summers no longer. Snow and ice still cover the whole landscape from September to the end of May, and earth and sea have not ceased to support the same animals, the same birds, and the same fish, that they nurtured two thousand years ago. In what ways, then, has their environment altered?

The game is still there, but the firearms we whites introduced have decimated their numbers, and only in two or three places can Eskimo hunters now obtain sufficient meat and fish to nourish their families throughout the twelve months of the year, or enough furs to protect their bodies from the intense cold. The walrus have disappeared from many districts, the erratic movements of the seals have heightened the difficulties of capturing them, the musk-oxen are threatened with extinction, and the caribou, estimated late in the nineteenth century to total two and a half million, are now reduced to one-tenth of that number. A century ago, when every Eskimo hunter required six caribou hides to clothe himself, an equal number for his wife, and three, four or five hides for each of his children, he endeavoured to kill each season at least two dozen of the deer; but many of his grandsons today have never seen a live caribou, and neither know how to stalk one with bows and arrows as their grandparents did, now how to make serviceable bows. The grandparents were completely self-supporting; everything they needed—food, clothing, shelter, cooking utensils, weapons and tools—they obtained by their own exertions or fashioned with their own hands, using only the materials that nature placed at their command. The modern Eskimo has reached the stage when he must obtain most of his food and clothing from the outside world, along with the boat in which he hunts and travels, the timber from which he builds his home, the fuel to make that home habitable, and the furniture he requires, or believes that he requires, to give his household minimum comfort.

Naturally, the outside world does not offer him all these commodities as free gifts. In our commercial civilization imports must be paid for by exports either of money (or services calculated in money) or of goods. No money circulated in the American Arctic until quite

recently—in Canada's far north not before the Second World War; and almost the only goods our merchants would accept from the Eskimos were the pelts of the fur-bearing animals—foxes, polar bears, musk-rats, seals, and, on the lower Yukon River, beaver and mink. Far the most remunerative were the pelts of the foxes. Accordingly, late in the nineteenth century, there sprang up a flourishing fur-trade; and this trade, which began as simple barter, gradually introduced the Eskimos to our money economy and created the economic base they needed to maintain steady commercial relations with the civilized world.

This new base, however, demanded a revolution in their daily life. Just as the invention of the motor-car has changed the habits of every civilized nation, so the necessity of trapping the small fur-bearing animals upset the traditional routine of Eskimo life. Instead of hunting seals on the frozen ocean from November to April of each year they were forced now to trap foxes, which could not yield blubber to heat and light their homes and were useless for meat except to starving dogs. The food, the clothing, and the other necessities of life which trapping allowed them neither time nor opportunity to acquire for themselves, even when they retained the skill, they purchased from the traders with the cash or credits they received for their furs. There were years in which an Eskimo was paid \$40 or \$50—at the peak \$65—for a single white-fox fur, \$200 for the rarer blue fox, which is a color variety of the white, and for the black fox, which is a color variety of the red, a slightly different species, \$300 and even \$400. So their life pattern changed.

In spite of this change, however, all appeared to go well for half a century, because in both America and Europe fine furs continued in strong demand and brought high prices, while the costs of food, clothing and other goods remained relatively low. Civilization's diseases—measles, smallpox, influenza and tuberculosis—committed great ravages, but the morale of the Eskimos held firm, and the apparent stability of the fur-trade sheltered them from some of their earlier hardships and perils. Throughout that half-century, however, their economic independence was declining, their sturdy self-sufficiency evaporating. More and more tightly they were being chained to the trading-posts, exposed to the mercy of fickle trade currents which they could neither comprehend nor escape. They could not turn the clock back; they could not revert to the life of their ancestors and recover their lost freedom, any more than we can revive the age of the ox-cart and the spinning-wheel. The trade current carried them relentlessly along, although for those fifty years its small rapids seemed to threaten no danger.

Then, in the early 1930's, the great depression toppled the world of commerce, and the fragile bark to which the Eskimos had committed their fortunes foundered. The prices that civilization now

offered them for their furs slumped heavily, while the costs of flour, tea, bacon, clothing, ammunition, tobacco, and other commodities without which they could no longer survive, skyrocketed. In northern Labrador the veteran Hudson's Bay Company, which had been operating half-a-dozen fur-trading posts along the coast, threw up its hands and abandoned to the Newfoundland government the burden of supplying the needs of the region's inhabitants. Everywhere throughout the American Arctic the traffic in the furs of the wild animals became unprofitable, or yielded inadequate returns. Today an Eskimo, whether he lives in Canada or in Alaska, can no longer support his family for more than a few weeks on the miserable pin-money—from \$200 to \$500 a year—which is all he can expect to earn from his pelts.

Time has convincingly proved that fox-furs never can be a suitable base on which to rest the economy of a whole people. They are luxury articles, subject to all the winds and breezes of fickle fashion. This year white-fox furs may be the height of style, next year out-dated. Moreover, the harvest of furs never holds steady from one season to another, because the population of white foxes, like that of many other Arctic animals, runs in cycles; in the white-fox cycle, it reaches a peak every four or five years and then declines. Finally, man has greatly complicated the fur trade by domesticating some of the wild animals and introducing synthetic furs. For these reasons, no one now looks forward to any return of the old high prices for Arctic furs, or believes that the Eskimos can ever again become prosperous from trapping. If they are to survive and prosper in the Arctic, they must find another economic base, or combination of bases, more secure than the fur-trade, on which to rebuild their lives.

Where can they look for such a base? It must be one that will yield each family an income, in cash or in cash and kind, of from \$1500 to \$2000 yearly, for that is the minimum the family must now possess to pay for the necessities and near-necessities that it cannot win itself from the Arctic, but must acquire from southern Canada. What resources does the far north hold that will provide such an income to every Eskimo family?

As far as we know today, the Arctic is extremely poor in resources useful to man, except perhaps mineral resources; and the exploitation of mineral wealth requires more capital than the Eskimos now possess, and also more knowledge. The severe climate, and the grave transportation problems it creates, make the region one of very high cost; and ores must be unusually rich or valuable to overcome that handicap. Hitherto we have failed to uncover such ores in adequate tonnage, though we have taught the Eskimos to mine a little coal in Greenland and Alaska, and for four years have operated, largely with Eskimo labour, a small nickel mine, now unhappily exhausted, on the west coast of Hudson Bay. Nevertheless,

geological structures in northern Labrador and elsewhere favour the presence of valuable minerals, and it would seem to be only a question of time before the world's hunger for metals will lead to more intensive investigations and the discovery of ore-bodies that will more than repay their exploitation. When that day comes, their development will demand a large labour force, large enough, perhaps, to embrace all or most of the Eskimos who now live in the Arctic, and who prefer to remain there if only they can find the means to support their families and themselves.

Until mining does develop in the Arctic, however, what can we do, and what are we doing now, to preserve these Eskimos from dire poverty, outright destitution, and perhaps slow extinction?

In a few districts—*e.g.*, Barrow on the northern tip of Alaska, Iglood in Hudson Bay, and perhaps Resolute in the Arctic Archipelago, small bodies of Eskimos can still kill enough seals, whales and walrus to keep the wolf of hunger from their doors; but in other districts hunting is more precarious and frequently ends in failure. In any case hunting and trapping, as we have seen already, no longer bring in the income the Eskimos require to purchase clothing, ammunition, boats and lumber for proper housing and other needs. Authorities in Alaska and Canada are encouraging commercial fishing and handicrafts, but these pursuits, though valuable, have yielded less than trapping and benefit only a very small percentage of the population. Government construction projects in various districts between North Alaska and the Atlantic coast of Labrador, oil explorations on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, and one or two minor enterprises, have given welcome work to a few hundred Eskimos, but many of the projects have lapsed or are lapsing. Consequently, only wage-employment seems capable of providing the solid economic base the Eskimos need to rebuild their lives; but at the present time the Arctic itself offers very little employment, and will probably never offer enough, or even nearly enough, until mining expands into the far north and gains a firm foothold. The region lacks the natural resources to feed and clothe its present population, even at mere subsistence level; and how many years must pass before mining and other industries spring up to make it economically viable no one knows.

Meanwhile, in the Canadian Arctic, where the Eskimo working force numbers almost 6,000, nearly 2,000 of them young men between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five, only about five per cent are able to find jobs that bring them in steady wages. All the rest must continue to fish and hunt for their daily food, snatch an odd day's work whenever the opportunity comes their way, and trap foxes or musk-rats during the winter to provide \$200—or, if they are lucky \$300—in hard cash. To that pocket-money they may be able to add an equal sum by selling a few fish or handicraft objects; but after that, merely to keep themselves and their families alive, they must

look to the government to double their paltry incomes with pensions, family allowances and straight relief. In Alaska, whose Eskimo population is nearly twice that of Canada, conditions are broadly similar. Nowhere in the American Arctic can the Eskimos obtain even a bare subsistence without government subsidies and doles, over and above the free schooling and the free medical care that it provides to keep them healthy in mind and body.

Can we keep them healthy in either mind or body now that they have lost the proud self-sufficiency of their forefathers and become mere appendages, mere hangers-on, of our impatient, hustling and in many ways ruthless civilization? I have lived with primitive Eskimos, some of whom were seeing a white man for the first time; I have felt them scrutinize and measure me, and been conscious that they considered themselves the white man's superior. And in their own Arctic, the only world they knew, they were superior, whenever fate stripped the white man of civilization's rifles and other inventions and left him as bare-handed as they were. Ignorant though they were by our standards, they overflowed with health and energy and self-confidence, untouched by the tuberculosis, influenza and virtually all the other diseases that civilization carries in its train. "We are the captains of our fate," they seemed to say, though they knew, just as well as we do, that fate weaves her web blindly, and that no man knows the day or the hour when she will snip his strand.

Last summer, in Hudson Bay, I visited some younger and more sophisticated kinsmen of the primitive Eskimos with whom I had lived many years earlier. To outward appearance they were healthy still, although many hundreds of them had been hospitalized with tuberculosis during the last fifteen years. Inwardly they had greatly changed. Gone was the sturdy bearing and proud assurance of former years. They seemed distrustful and listless; instead of looking straight into my face they watched me from the corners of their eyes. They were sick in their souls, sick with that malady we have seen in Europeans who were uprooted from their homes and their work during and after the recent world war and herded into makeshift refugee camps, where months and sometimes years of idleness, a humiliating dependence on strangers for their daily bread, and the blankness of their future gradually undermined their morale and sapped their energy and courage.

Fortunately they have not changed entirely. These depressed, demoralized Hudson Bay Eskimos, and their kinsmen elsewhere in the American Arctic, whether they hunt and trap foxes for a bare livelihood or sit in their homes and work at handicrafts, have not yet lost the most characteristic trait of their ancestors, the super-sensitive funny-bone. Their faces can still light up at trivial jokes and glow with the old-time animation; and as long as they retain this bubbling sense of humour, they can still bequeath something of value to our modern world. Doubtless they will vanish as a separate race,

different physically from other races on our globe. Survival of that kind would demand a return to their former isolation, and that is no longer possible in our shrinking world. Already you can see freckled faces and flaming red hair in some Hudson Bay settlements, while many Greenlanders can be distinguished from Scandinavians only by their speech. Their Eskimo speech, too, may follow their peculiar physical traits into oblivion. But the soul of the people, the hardihood, the courage, the ingenuity, the bubbling humour, these and other sturdy qualities that enabled them to conquer the Arctic they can still bequeath to future generations, provided we restore their dignity and their self-confidence, help them to stand once more on their own feet economically, and invite them to step side by side with us in civilization's onward march.

Goethe has pointed out the road for them, and for us too, in the second part of his *Faust*. Man's redemption comes only from work, honest, constructive, rewarding work. If today the Arctic cannot offer such work to its Eskimos, we should encourage as many of them as is possible to move into the industrial south and train for the same jobs as their fellow-citizens, whether these be of English or French extraction, Russian or Chinese. We need not bring all of them south, or nearly all, but should recruit mainly the younger and more adaptable volunteers, men and women, between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, for whom today the north is unable to make adequate provision. And they need not remain forever in our midst. Many, we would hope, will voluntarily return to their homeland as soon as it can offer them a living wage.

It will not be easy to settle America's Eskimos in the south, whether it be in the United States or in southern Canada. Immigrants who come to this hemisphere from Poland, from Greece, or from China immediately find relatives, or at least fellow-countrymen, who stretch out welcoming hands, familiar churches that open wide their doors, and people who speak their tongue ready to help them obtain employment. But the Eskimos will find no one who understands their language, save three or four ex-missionaries; and, as yet, very few of our Canadian Eskimos have acquired more than the feeblest smattering of English. These first migrants to the south will be unable to find their way in our cities, to order a meal at a restaurant or engage a room in a hotel, unless we appoint ourselves their guardians and watch over them during the first months or year of their sojourn. We will have to protect them from civilization's pitfalls, guide them through the mazes of urban life, buoy up their morale and speed up their education and training until they are capable of standing alone. They for their part will have to conquer loneliness and frustration, bewilderment and dismay; they must struggle with all their might to fit themselves into a world different from any they or their forefathers have ever seen in their most imaginative dreams. It will be difficult, very difficult, for them, and difficult for us also,

demanding all the patience and wisdom we and they can muster. But is it not better for all of us that they should struggle and work for a better life in our industrial south than rot in idleness in the far north, maintained by government doles?

The survival of the Eskimos, the survival, not of their identity as a separate race,—for that is impossible,—but of those admirable qualities which their race has evolved through centuries of isolation in the Arctic, rests with ourselves. They are too poor, too inexperienced in our ways, to take the initiative in any change; the initiative must come from us. And time presses. Every year Canada's expenses on relief in the Arctic grow heavier, and the morale of our Eskimos sinks lower. If we are to save them we must act quickly. Will we?

It is the present generation of Canadians, you young men who are just leaving college, who must supply the answer. We, your elders, made a grievous mistake before the Second World War. We shamefully neglected this remarkable race that had pushed into the Arctic before ever our ancestors learned to cultivate the soil. We failed to appreciate their experience and their talents, to open up a place for them in our civilized world. Only since the war have we tried to repair our error, to educate and train them; and only by highly concentrated efforts in a favorable environment can one remodel the minds and outlook of a people in a few years. So it remains for you to end the senseless waste of their talents, to integrate them into our society, to train them for the tasks of civilization and summon them to join with us in building up a greater and more prosperous Canada.

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America's Eskimos; Can they
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